

REMARKS

In response to the above noted Office Action, Claims 8, 11 and 20 have been cancelled. New claims 29-33 have been added. Claims 1-7, 9-10, 12-19, and 21-33 remain.

The Examiner indicated that Claims 1, 10 and 18 are objected to because of informalities, stating "claim 1, line 6, lacks antecedent basis for using the phrase "the subsequent passing"; claim 10 lacks antecedent basis for using the phrases "this passage" and "and possibly repeating the procedure at a different height"; and claim 18 includes the phrase ", as will be shown in more detail later" refers to later dependent claims without any particular reference and accordingly reads as a multiple dependent claim.

Applicant has amended Claims 1, 10 and 18 to overcome the objections.

Claims 1-3, 5-10, 12, 15-19, 27 and 28 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Tokutsu. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Tokutsu in view of Roybal. Claims 23-26 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Tokutsu in view of Cottrell. However, the Examiner indicated that Claims 11, 13, 14, 20, 21 and 22 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, in response to the above-noted prior art rejections, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 11 and its intervening claim, claim 8, thereby placing claim 1 in condition for allowance. Similarly, claim 15 has been amended to correspond to claim 20 rewritten in independent form. Claims 8, 11 and 20 have been cancelled with the remaining claims among claims 1-21 depending from allowable claim 1, or allowable claim 15.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12-19 and 21-28 are in condition for allowance. Additionally, Applicant has added independent claims 29-33. Claim 29 corresponds to allowable claim 13 rewritten in independent form. Claim 30 corresponds to allowable claim 21 rewritten in independent. Claim 31 corresponds to allowable claim 14 rewritten in independent form. The remaining added claims 32 and 33 depend from allowable claims 29 and 30 respectively. In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that added claims 29-33 are also in condition for allowance.

Further, in response to the objection to the Abstract, Applicant has amended the Abstract responsive to the objection.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge those fees to our Deposit Account No. 02-2666. If a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of this Application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME

Per 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a) and in connection with the Office Action mailed on JULY 21, 2005, Applicant respectfully petitions Commissioner for a three (3) month extension of time, extending the period for response to JANUARY 21, 2006. Attached is a check in the amount of \$1,020 to cover the petition filing fee for a 37 C.F.R. 1.17(a)(3) large entity. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN, LLP

Dated: _____

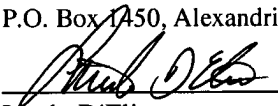
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.


Linda D'Elia

1-20-06
January 20, 2006